

BUSINESS MONDAY
Where are the stone crabs? Shortage is driving up prices, 16



SPORTS
24-16 loss to Bills all but ends the Dolphins' playoff hopes, 18



Miami Herald

H1



WISH BOOK
ACCIDENT LEFT HIM PARALYZED
Osmel Pimienta Morales has worked hard to become independent, but he could use a lighter wheelchair, 3A



AMERICAS
EX-PRESIDENT WINS IN CHILE
Billionaire former President Sebastián Piñera easily won Chile's presidential runoff election, 8A



WORLD
PUTIN THANKS TRUMP FOR TIP
Russian president phones President Trump to thank him for intel from the CIA that thwarted a planned terrorist attack, 7A



JOSE A. IGLESIAS jiglesias@elnuevoherald.com

Green iguanas first appeared in Florida in the 1960s and continued to grow in numbers as more pet owners released them or they escaped. They outnumber many native reptiles.

THE IGUANA INVASION CAN ANYTHING TURN IT BACK?

■ **State wildlife managers have upped efforts to battle invasive green iguanas in the Florida Keys by hiring a trapper. If the plan works, they hope to expand it across South Florida.**

BY JENNY STALETOVICH
jstaletovich@miamiherald.com

Growing up on Key Biscayne in the 1970s, Paul Zuccarini had no idea the commonplace green iguanas he loved to chase were as exotic as the tourists that descended every winter. They were like “prehistoric beasts,” said Zuccarini, who would release his prize captures back into the wild. “If we caught a three- to five-foot iguana, it was like catching a dinosaur.” Except these dinosaurs have

gone the opposite of extinct. Since they first appeared in the 1960s, green iguanas have become as ubiquitous in South Florida as sunshine. They outnumber many native reptiles and thrive along cultivated urban coasts that provide a feast-able landscape of bougainvillea and hibiscus. Just about every golf course, park and retention pond offers perfect habitat for herds of bright green and orange lizards. While annoying, state officials have until now not taken an aggressive approach. Rangers routinely trapped them,

but more intense efforts were saved for a long list of invasive species, like pythons and lionfish, that threatened wildlife and choked native habitat. Iguanas didn't eat native birds or animals and weren't moving into protected marshes. A 2010 freeze also helped thin the population. Frozen iguanas literally dropped from trees. But that's starting to change, as the number of iguanas and the damage they inflict reach what might be a tipping point. This month, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission hired a

SEE IGUANAS, 4A

FLORIDA JUVENILE JUSTICE

State missed red flag in youth worker's record

■ **The state of Florida, responding to an exposé by the Miami Herald, said it tightened its screening procedures for hiring staff to supervise delinquent youths. So how did Chris W. Jeffries slip through the cracks?**

BY CAROL MARBIN MILLER
cmarbin@miamiherald.com

It took just two months for Chris W. Jeffries to get into trouble at his new job as a counselor for delinquent teens with drug or behavior problems. A week ago, police charged him with child abuse on allegations that he slugged a 16-year-old boy in the jaw at the Pembroke Pines program where he worked. Administrators at the Broward Youth Treatment Center hired him on Oct. 9, despite an ominous sign that Jeffries might have an anger management problem — just like many of the kids he'd be supervising. In June 2016, police say, he pulled a gun on his roommate and threatened to kill her after she demanded that he move out of the home they shared. Jeffries' roommate later changed her mind and declined to cooperate with prosecutors, who dropped the case. It's the exact sort of red flag that is supposed to trigger an alarm under a stringent new hiring policy designed to weed out youth workers with the kind of criminal backgrounds or unsavory work histories likely to render them unfit to work with hard-to-manage teenagers. The new procedures were developed eight months ago in response to a Miami Herald investigation that documented widespread excessive force and other misconduct within Department of Juvenile Justice lock-ups and residential programs.



Jeffries

SEE COUNSELOR, 2A

U.S. CONGRESS

GOP faces 5-day scramble to pass tax bill, avoid shutdown

■ **Republicans plan to vote on the massive tax bill early in the week, leaving them little time to strike a deal with Democrats to authorize funds to keep the government running.**

BY JEFF STEIN, MIKE DEBONIS AND PATRICK REIS
Washington Post

Republicans return to Congress on Monday facing a packed agenda with little time to enact it, as party leaders aim to quickly pass their massive tax plan and then cut a budget deal with Democrats before the end of Friday to

avert a government shutdown. Republicans' tight timing on taxes is self-imposed. GOP lawmakers have for months been racing to meet President Donald Trump's demand that they send him tax legislation before Christmas — a timeline that gained new urgency when Alabama Democrat Doug Jones won the Senate seat currently occupied by Sen. Luther Strange, a Republican. GOP leaders hope to hold tax votes early in the week before moving to the budget bill. They need Democrats' help to pass the budget measure through the

SEE GOP, 4A

DEATH OF SGT. LA DAVID JOHNSON

U.S. soldier fought to the end after ambush in Niger

■ **A military investigation has concluded that Army Sgt. La David Johnson of Miami Gardens wasn't captured alive or killed at close range, dispelling a swirl of rumors about how he died.**

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON
Army Sgt. La David Johnson died in a hail of gunfire, hit as many as 18 times as he took cover in thick brush, fighting to the end after fleeing militants who had just killed three comrades in an October am-



Johnson

bush in Niger, The Associated Press has learned. A military investigation has concluded that Johnson wasn't captured alive or killed at close range, dispelling a swirl of rumors about how he died. The report has determined that Johnson, 25, of Miami Gardens was killed by enemy rifle and machine gun fire from members of an Islamic State offshoot, according to U.S. officials familiar with the findings. The Oct. 4 ambush took

SEE JOHNSON, 2A

CUSTOMER SERVICE

To subscribe or report delivery issues,
800-843-4372 or miamiherald.com/customer-service

Business
Classified
Comics

1G
19-24G
14A

Deaths
Lottery
Local news

15A
10A
3A

People
Puzzles
Television

11A
12A
11A

